

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Public Utilities Commission

Minutes of Open Meeting Held September 1, 2005

Attendees: Chairman Elia Germani, Commissioner Mary Bray, Steven Frias, Cindy Wilson-Frias, Thomas Massaro, Alan Nault, Douglas Hartley and Luly Massaro

Chairman Germani called the open meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. in the first-floor hearing room of the Public Utilities Commission.

Minutes of Open Meetings: Approval of the Minutes of Open Meetings held on July 14, 2005, July 28, 2005 and August 11, 2005 was postponed until next meeting.

Competitive Telecommunications Service Providers:

The following company filed an application for authority to provide telecommunications service. The Division has reviewed the application and recommends approval of:

2262(C20) – Voicecom Telecommunications, LLC

3686 – Bellsouth Long Distance, Inc.

3691 – Navigator Telecommunications, LLC

3693 – Ernest Communications, Inc.

After review, Chairman Germani moved to approve applications. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 2-0.**

The following companies submitted tariff revisions. The Division has reviewed the tariff revisions and does not recommend suspension of:

2702 – Verizon Select Services, Inc. (tariffs filed 8/11/05)

2618 – AT&T Communications (tariffs filed 8/11 & 8/16/05)

2426 – TCG Rhode Island (tariffs filed 8/18, 8/19 & 8/22/05)

2535 – Cox RI Telcom (tariffs filed 8/4, 8/5 & 8/22/05)

2621 – MCI WorldCom Communications (tariffs filed 8/1/05)

2486 – MCImetro Access Transmission Service, LLC (tariffs filed 8/1/05)

2472 – Sprint Communications (tariffs filed 8/1/05)

2878 – Choice One Communications (tariffs filed 8/5/05)

2262(A6) – SBC Long Distance, LLC (tariffs filed 8/4 & 8/12/05)

2262(D) – Operator Service Co., LLC (tariffs filed 8/12/05)

2262(P7) – MCI WorldCom Communications (tariffs filed 8/1/05)

After review, Chairman Germani moved to follow the Division's recommendation that the tariff filings be allowed to go into effect without suspension.

The following company ceased operation and requests that its authority to operate be rescinded:

2262(E17) – Tralee Telephone Co. LLC

After review, Chairman Germani moved to rescind the authority of Tralee Telephone Co. Commissioner Bray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 2-0.**

Narragansett Electric Co.: During the Narragansett Electric hearing in Docket 3689, public comments were raised about the Company engaging an independent contractor to assist in the termination and restoration of utility service. The Company submitted a response to the comments raised. After review, Chairman Germani noted that there is no evidence that would indicate the Company has violated or that a contract to hire temporary and seasonal employee to assist the Company would be in violation with the terms of the Commission's rules governing the termination of utility service and therefore, he opined that it does not warrant initiating an investigation in that matter. Commissioner Bray shared the same sentiment and concurred with the Chairman.

Chairman Germani moved to amend the open meeting agenda to discuss the following matters. The motion to amend the agenda was seconded by Commissioner Bray. Motion to amend the agenda was unanimously passed. **Vote 2-0.**

- Commissioner Bray noted that the Commission is in receipt of a letter from the Senate requesting that the Commission possibly look into assisting customers facing higher energy costs. She asked Narragansett Electric and New England Gas to consider voluntarily relaxing their payment plan requirements through November 1, 2005, in a manner similar to that which was passed by the General Assembly in July.

She asked the utilities to consider accepting from Protected Status Customers with arrearage balances less than \$2800 a down payment of 20%. Also to consider allowing these customers to spread the arrearage payments over 24 months and make the initial twelve payments equal to 1/24 of the arrearage each month and 1/12 of the prospective 12 month usage. Assuming a customer remains current on his or her payments, toward the end of the twelve month period, the Company would send notification to the customer of the new payments for second twelve month payment period based on then anticipated usage and cost.

If the Companies agree to this voluntary payment plan structure, she requested that they track the customers who enroll, including number enrolled, balances and payment schedules for November 1, 2005, February 1, 2006 and April 15, 2006.

Chairman Germani joined Commissioner Bray's request to the utilities. No vote was taken.

- At the public comment hearings in Narragansett Electric Co. Docket 3689, questions have been raised regarding bonuses paid to National Grid's management. Commissioner Bray would like some more information regarding this matter, so she will be working with staff to develop data requests.

The open meeting adjourned at 2:20 P.M.